

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A controlling device for controlling a PC and one or more home appliances, the
controlling device comprising;

5 a wireless transmitter for sending control data to the PC and one or more home
appliances;

 a sensor for activating a first control mode and a second control mode based on
interaction of the control device with a surface; and

10 a user interface for at least partially enabling the first control mode and the second
control mode;

 wherein the controlling device transmits signals via the wireless transmitter to
control the PC in the first control mode and transmits signals via the wireless transmitter
to control the one or more home appliances in the second mode.

15 2. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the wireless transmitter
comprises a first wireless transmitter and a second wireless transmitter, the first wireless
transmitter being associated with the first control mode and the second wireless
transmitter being associated with the second control mode.

20 3. The controlling device as recited in claim 2, wherein the first wireless transmitter
is an RF wireless transmitter.

4. The controlling device as recited in claim 2, wherein the second wireless transmitter is an IR wireless transmitter.
5. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the controlling device is automatically configured to operate in the first control mode based on user interaction with the controlling device.
6. The controlling device as recited in claim 5, wherein the user interaction comprises causing the sensor of the controlling device to interact with the surface.
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7. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the controlling device is automatically configured to operate in the second control mode based on user interaction with the controlling device.
- 15 8. The controlling device as recited in claim 7, wherein the user interaction comprises causing the sensor of the controlling device to be removed from the surface.
9. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the sensor additionally provides for a determination of whether the controlling device is being used to interact
20 with a surface, or has been removed from the surface.

10. The controlling device as recited in claim 9, wherein the determination that the controlling device is being used to interact with a surface causes activation of the first control mode.

5 11. The controlling device as recited in claim 9, wherein the determination that the controlling device has been removed from the surface causes activation of the second control mode.

10 12. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the user interface comprises
10 a button based user interface.

13. The controlling device as recited in claim 12, wherein the button based user interface comprises at least one hard button.

15 14. The controlling device as recited in claim 12, wherein the button based user interface comprises an EL panel.

15. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the sensor for activating a first control mode additionally functions to at least partially enable the first control mode.

20 16. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the first control mode is a mouse based control mode.

17. The controlling device as recited in claim 1, wherein the second control mode is a remote control based control mode.

18. A controlling device for controlling first and second appliances, the controlling
5 device comprising;
a transmitter for sending control data signals; and
a sensor for determining a position of the controlling device relative to a surface;
wherein the controlling device is configured to automatically switch between a
first control mode wherein the controlling device is adapted to transmit control data
10 signals via the transmitter to control functions of the first appliance and a second
control mode wherein the controlling device is adapted to transmit control data
signals via the transmitter to control functions of the second appliance as a function of
the position of the controlling device relative to the surface as determined using the
sensor.

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19. The controlling device as recited in claim 18, wherein the first appliance is a PC.

20. The controlling device as recited in claim 19, wherein at least some of the control
signals transmitted in the first control mode function to move a PC cursor.

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21. The controlling device as recited in claim 20, wherein at least one of the control
signals transmitted in the second mode functions to move a PC cursor.

22. A method for using a controlling device to command functions of first and second appliances, comprising:

determining a position of the controlling device relative to a surface; and
automatically causing the controlling device to toggle between a first control

5 mode wherein the controlling device is adapted to transmit control data signals to control functions of the first appliance and a second control mode wherein the controlling device is adapted to transmit control data signals to control functions of the second appliance as a function of the determined position of the controlling device relative to the surface.

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23. The method as recited in claim 22, comprising using a sensor to determine the position of the controlling device relative to the surface.

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24. The method as recited in claim 23, comprising using the sensor to determine x-y movement of the controlling device relative to the surface and transmitting control data signals in the first control mode that are indicative of the x-y movement.

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25. For use in a controlling device, a readable media having instructions for using the controlling device to command functions of first and second appliances, the instructions performing steps comprising:

determining a position of the controlling device relative to a surface; and
automatically causing the controlling device to toggle between a first control mode wherein the controlling device is adapted to transmit control data signals to

control functions of the first appliance and a second control mode wherein the controlling device is adapted to transmit control data signals to control functions of the second appliance as a function of the determined position of the controlling device relative to the surface.

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26. The readable media as recited in claim 25, wherein the instructions cause periodic activation of a sensor to determine the position of the controlling device relative to the surface.

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27. The readable media as recited in claim 26, wherein the instructions use signals from the sensor to determine x-y movement of the controlling device relative to the surface and cause control data signals to be transmitted in the first control mode that are indicative of the x-y movement.

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28. The readable media as recited in claim 27, wherein the controlling device comprises a graphical user interface having activatable elements for causing control data signals to be transmitted in the second control mode and wherein the instructions cause the graphical user interface to be hidden when the controlling device is in the first control mode.

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